ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST

BRINGING OUR STORY TO LIFE

Heritage Matters

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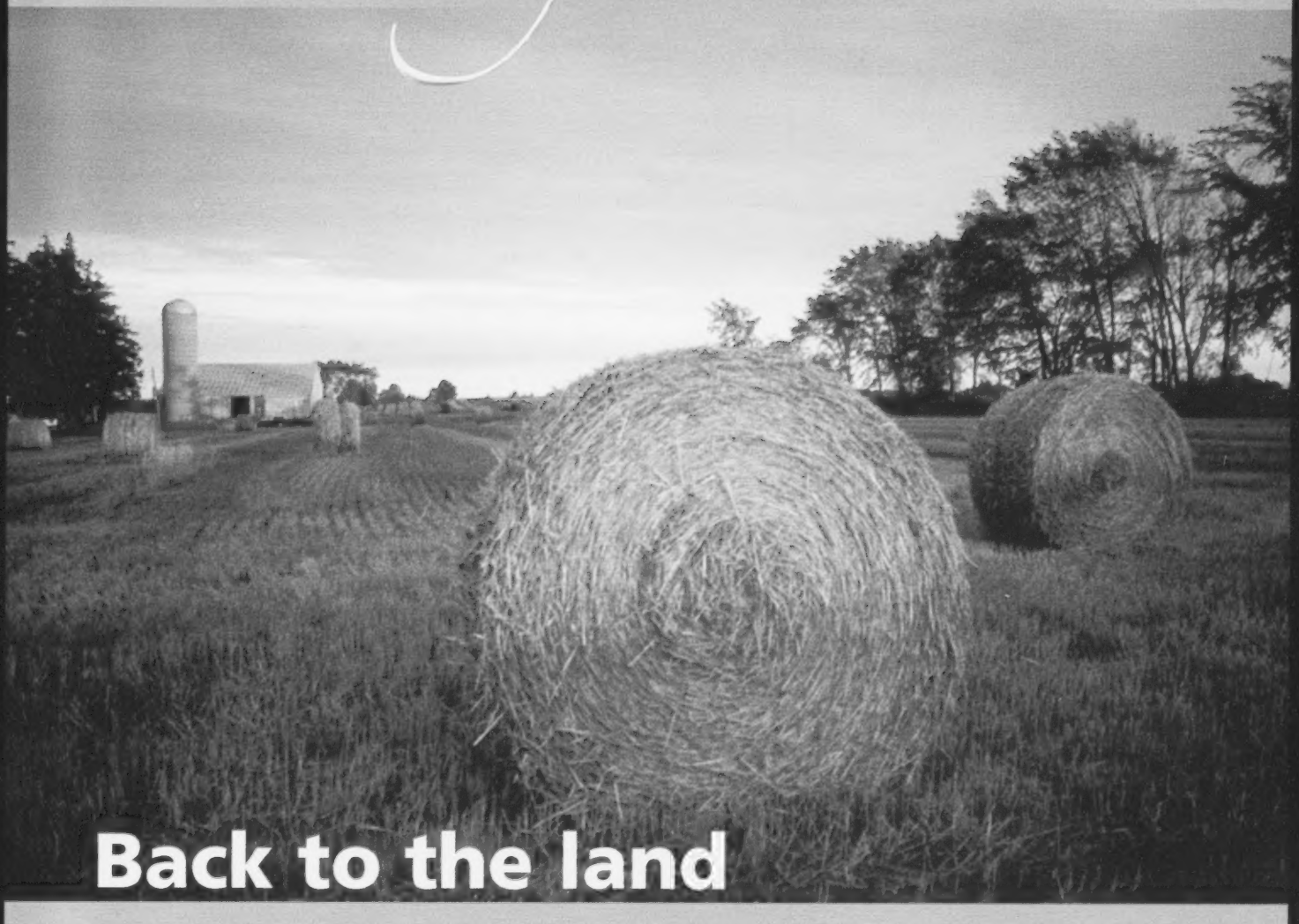

Back to the land

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Protecting Ontario's agricultural landscapes: Challenges and opportunities
The Trust welcomes its new Executive Director
Evolution of the agricultural cultural landscape
Understanding indigenous agricultural systems

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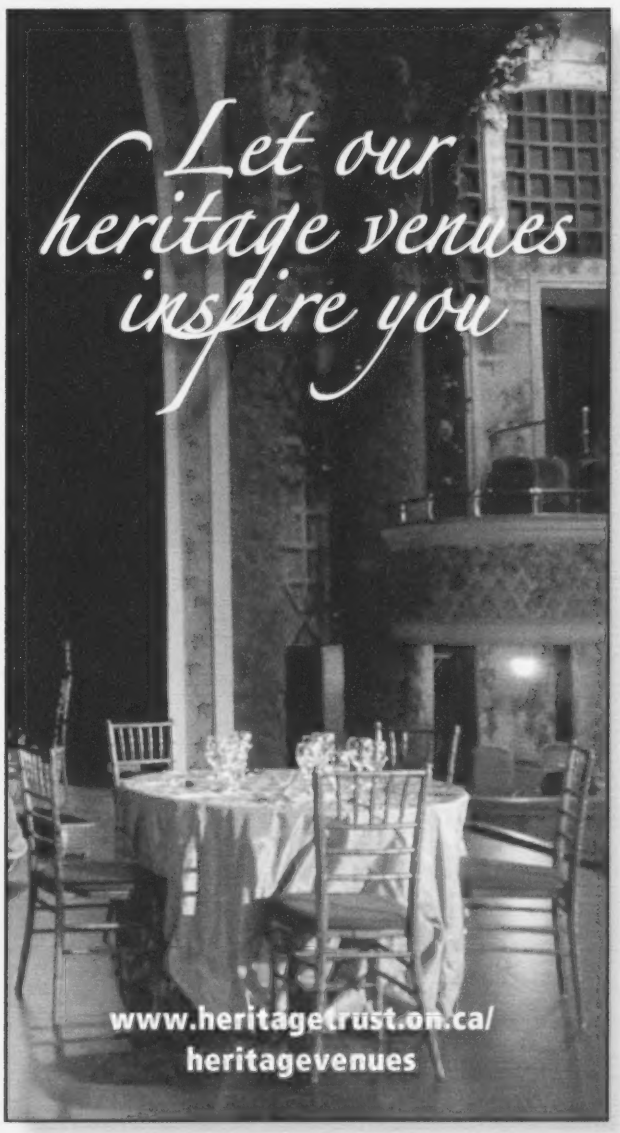

A message from the Chairman

Agriculture represents a significant element of Ontario's heritage. It has been, and continues to be, a determining factor in settlement patterns, social organization, economic development and policy-making decisions. Over time, agriculture in Ontario has been subject to a number of pressures that have resulted in the eradication of some of Canada's most fertile land. These pressures, however, have also been the catalyst for the growth of movements and organizations, and the development of relevant legislation, to ensure the protection and ongoing viability of agricultural landscapes, and to acknowledge their place in the broader social, economic and ecological systems of the province.

In recent years, a growing interest in – and desire for – fresh, local food has resulted in the emergence of greater numbers of local food initiatives, including farmers' markets and farm-to-table dining experiences in communities across the province. Such initiatives provide important support to farmers, while at the same time working to boost the local economy.

The preservation of working landscapes has been accompanied by efforts to inventory and map elements of Ontario's agricultural identity – including built structures, landscape features and current and former processing sites, such as cheese factories and abattoirs. Work of this nature promotes a greater understanding of the place of agriculture in the past, present and future of the province, and presents interesting opportunities for tourism and economic development.

Confronted with these ongoing pressures, agriculture will continue to be of more critical importance than ever to sustainable human life in Ontario. The livability and quality of our future will be, in part, determined by the success of efforts to preserve farmland, and to raise awareness about how our farming heritage can benefit the province.

Tom Symons

Thomas H.B. Symons, CC, O.Ont, FRSC, LLD

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Cover image: Bales of hay on a farm near Stratford. Photo © Ontario Tourism.

Feature story

Protecting Ontario's agricultural landscapes: Challenges and opportunities

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ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST
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The Trust welcomes its new Executive Director

By Gordon Pim

Beth Hanna, the Ontario Heritage Trust's new Executive Director. (Photo: David Lee)

The Ontario Heritage Trust will continue to identify, protect, renew and promote Ontario's rich and diverse built, cultural and natural heritage – all under the leadership of a new Executive Director.

The appointment of Beth Hanna as Executive Director was officially announced in July by Trust Chairman Dr. Thomas H.B. Symons and Steven Davidson, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Hanna has served as the Trust's Director of Heritage Programs and Operations since 2000. She has also provided significant contributions to a number of government initiatives, including the Ministry of Culture's Implementation Team for the 2005 Amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act, the Ministry of Natural Resources' Natural Spaces Leadership Alliance and the Religious Heritage Properties Working Group. With more than 30 years of experience in the field of conservation, Hanna held senior leadership positions in culture and heritage at the City of Toronto prior to joining the Trust.

"I am delighted to welcome Beth to this new role," said Chairman Symons, "and look forward to working with her and with our dedicated partners across the province to celebrate and protect our unique heritage. Her strong leadership and commitment to conservation will ensure that the Trust remains a centre of excellence for the delivery of services to the government and communities of Ontario."

Gordon Pim is the Trust's Senior Web Communications and Marketing Specialist and Editor of Heritage Matters.

Parliament announces new arrivals

By Beth Anne Mendes

Three special artifacts were recently installed at the Parliament interpretive centre at 265 Front Street East in Toronto. Following the Heritage Day opening event in February of the exhibit Foundations & Fire: Early Parliament and the War of 1812 Experience at York, a British four-pounder cannon, a British Coehorn mortar and a commemorative bronze plaque were installed.

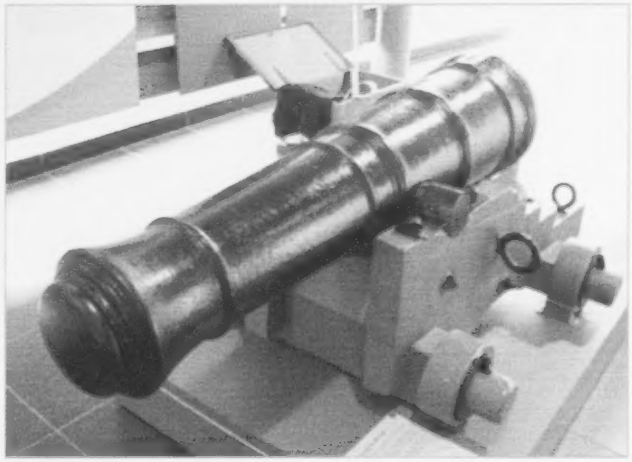
Iron four-pounders were used by the British from the 1720s until about 1820. Coehorn mortars were much smaller guns and were used to lob explosive projectiles over obstacles – such as walls and ramparts – to hit targets below. It is believed that mortars were held in the garrison stores at York during the War of 1812. The commemorative plaque was installed in 1934 by the Consumers' Gas Company when its buildings occupied the Trust's Front Street property.

These objects were loaned to the Trust for the duration of the exhibit. The four-pounder cannon and bronze plaque come to us from the City of Toronto, Museum Services, and the Coehorn mortar from Parks Canada.

Transportation and installation of the large cannon was a challenging operation that involved many people assisting at various points throughout its journey and installation. After the cannon's arrival at the centre, it had to be winched up and then carefully lowered onto a custom-made base that had been load tested for up to 2,400 pounds (1,089 kilograms).

Be sure to drop by to view these and all the artifacts – from the very small to the now very large – at the Parliament interpretive centre.

Beth Anne Mendes is the Trust's Plaque Program Coordinator and Project Coordinator for the Parliament interpretive centre.



In May 2012, a special performance was given at Parliament called The Bucket Brigade, a libretto developed by the Canadian Opera Company and performed by their After School Opera Program. The libretto is based on the attack and occupation of York in April 1813. Staff from Parliament shared history with the students as the libretto was being developed to provide context to this one-act opera.

2012 Adventures in Archaeology at the Spadina Museum

By Dena Doroszenko

This year marked the 10th anniversary of the joint public archaeology program delivered by the Ontario Heritage Trust and the City of Toronto at the Spadina Museum. Over the past decade, 239 campers have participated in the program, recovering over 18,000 archaeological artifacts.

Campers learned how to excavate and record what they found, and participated in workshops on artifact reconstruction, ethnobotany, genealogy and pottery making. In addition, they visited other Toronto archaeological sites.

Several areas at Spadina have been excavated, revealing the transformation of the site property during the Baldwin and Austin family ownership. An early to mid-19th-century farm outbuilding has been the focus of the camp for the past four summers. Earlier camp seasons focused on two areas that have revealed features related to the Austins' impact on the property – in particular, the laundry drying yard and the area behind the garage and chauffeur's residence, where landscaping changes were evident.

One of the more remarkable artifact finds over the years was the recovery of a Nettling projectile point in 2011. This artifact dates between 7500 B.C to 2500 B.C. The 2012 campers also recovered a small chert flake, further confirming early aboriginal presence on the Spadina property.

The Archaeology Camp program has contributed to the interpretation of the site, particularly the outbuildings and use of the property under the various owners and the historic lifestyles of these families. Further camp programs will continue this discovery process given the site's immense archaeological potential.

Dena Doroszenko is the Trust's archaeologist.

Liam Bowman and Alisha Mohamed preparing the trench for final photography.

Unveiling the past in 2012

By Sam Wesley

St. George the Martyr Anglican Church, Magnetawan.

The Provincial Plaque Program is one of the Trust's oldest and best-known activities. Each year, we unveil provincial plaques throughout Ontario to commemorate significant people, places or events that have helped shape Ontario's past.

The plaques unveiled in 2012 speak to the diversity of subjects commemorated through the Provincial Plaque Program. Although each plaque commemorates a unique subject, when taken together the plaque texts reveal a rich and multi-layered story about Ontario's development.

The plaques unveiled in 2012 were:

- **Syl Apps (1915-1998)** – celebrating this accomplished hockey player, businessman and politician (Paris)
- **The Ontario *Human Rights Code*** – commemorating the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Code (Toronto)
- **Timmins** – celebrating the 100th anniversary of the settlement of this northern Ontario city
- **St. George the Martyr Anglican Church** – acknowledging this Gothic revival parish church in Magnetawan
- **Mutual Life Head Office** – recognizing this Waterloo landmark for its architectural and commercial significance
- **The Dale Estate** – commemorating this former greenhouse operation, one of the largest flower producers in the world (Brampton)

The Trust would like to thank the community partners who contributed their energy, expertise, passion and resources to each plaque project. For more information about the Provincial Plaque Program, visit www.heritagetrust.on.ca. For information on those unveiled in 2012 – and the more than 1,200 other plaques throughout the province – visit the Trust's Online Plaque Guide (www.heritagetrust.on.ca/plaques).

Sam Wesley is the Acting Plaque Program Coordinator for the Trust.

Understanding indigenous

Ken'niiohontéhsa (strawberries). (Photo: Ryan DeCaire, Wáhta Mohawk Territory)

Throughout a long history, indigenous peoples – with their rich cultural diversities and complexities – have continued to live in a way that works to ensure environmental sustainability. They indeed triumph in the maintenance and perpetuation of the array of interdependent and interconnected relationships that comprise the cycles and balances of the natural environment. Embedded within many indigenous cultures are ways of thinking – understandings and languages that serve as foundations for the creation of human systems – that work in tandem with the custom of Iethi'nihsténha Ohwén:tsia (Mother Earth).

Like all of these systems, agriculture is by no means different, as indigenous people have maintained systems of agriculture that intend to do just that – to work within the environment and sustain life.

Indigenous agricultural systems have existed for millennia and are a representation of a mind-frame with sustainability and spirituality at their core. In particular, there is a diversity of techniques and strategies that indigenous people have developed and relied on that exist within the realms of fruit and vegetable cultivation and animal husbandry. Some of the most popular techniques and strategies include: permaculture design, integrated-pest management, inter-cropping, companion planting, cover-cropping, plant breeding, crop rotations and species diversity maintenance – all of which help to create a system that is not dependant on, or limited by, the use of fossil fuels. Also, there is a diversity of indigenous crops spread across the globe that were grown in North America long before European arrival, including: corn, beans, squash, sunflowers, Jerusalem artichokes, tobacco, strawberries, cranberries and blueberries.

Agriculture is primarily a southern Ontario phenomenon and it has been practised for over a thousand years, which long pre-dates European

agricultural systems

By Ryan DeCaire

arrival. Ontario is built on the rich agricultural traditions of many indigenous nations, including the Tionantati (Petun), Wendat (Huron), Attawandaronk (Neutral) and the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois). The Haudenosaunee, for example, whose agricultural practices are still resonant throughout their culture and traditions, have held a sophisticated farming and food production legacy and have played a significant, and perhaps leading, role as indigenous agriculturalists. Even though most of their knowledge has been dismissed in the development of conventional agriculture, what they have done and the knowledge they have shared is invaluable. With a history that goes back to the traditional homelands of the Mohawk Valley, where intensive agricultural systems were sustained long before European arrival, the Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk), who are among the Haudenosaunee, continue to maintain much of their traditional agriculture techniques, while also maintaining much of their diversity of traditional food and medicine crops.

One of the most common examples of an indigenous agricultural system is the Áhsen Nikontate'kén:'a (The Three Sisters). The Áhsen Nikontate'kén:'a, which continues to have huge influence in Haudenosaunee communities and many other indigenous and non-indigenous communities, is a complete system of growing ó:nenhste (corn), onon'ónhsera (squash) and ohsahé:ta (beans). This system incorporates ideas of companion planting, integrated-pest management and permaculture design, which ultimately create a self-sustaining system, while also producing nutrition for a complete diet. The Áhsen Nikontate'kén:'a, as a specific indigenous agricultural system, has contributed – and continues to contribute greatly – to the sustainable agriculture discussion.

A current example of indigenous agriculture is the initiative called Tsi Tewaienthótha (Where We Plant), currently taking place within the Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) community of Wáhta in central Ontario. Tsi Tewaienthótha is a community gardening initiative that began with community members who have been concerned about the cultural, environmental, linguistic, social and economic challenges facing their community. Tsi Tewaienthótha is a community effort in the design and implementation of growing traditional foods using sustainable and traditional techniques. It seeks to provide a comfortable and trustworthy area for the sharing of knowledge in food production, preservation and healthy and culturally appropriate eating, which strengthen community capacity and solidarity, builds confidence and revives and perpetuates Kanien'kehá:ka culture, traditions and language in relation to food. With an increased interest in returning to traditional foods and ensuring community health on all scales, the Wahtaró:non (Wáhta people) involved with the initiative understand that growing food can be linked directly to opportunities to preserve language, culture, health and education, while also helping to assert sovereignty and independence on many levels.

Mixed vegetable gardens.
(Photo: Charlotte Sahanatien, Wáhta Mohawk Territory)

Agriculture remains important to the Haudenosaunee and many other indigenous nations, especially in regard to community life, traditional ceremonies, maintaining health and well-being, strengthening food security and sovereignty, and reinforcing resilience in political, economic and social systems. Agriculture has been embedded within all aspects of Haudenosaunee life and, due to initiatives – like Tsi Tewaienthótha – it will continue to be significant into the future.

Ryan DeCaire Is from Wáhta Mohawk Territory. He is the coordinator of Tsi Tewaienthótha and is a Master's student in Sustainability Studies at Trent University. Note that the indigenous language used in this article is Kanienkéha (Mohawk).

Thistle Ha':
A national historic farm

By Jim Miller and Christopher Miller

Thistle Ha', a farm in Pickering, was settled by Scottish immigrant John Miller in 1839. Miller and his family were renowned for their livestock importation and breeding operations, particularly Shorthorn cattle, Clydesdale horses and Shropshire sheep. Twenty Miller family members were involved with purebred livestock businesses in Ontario alone.

John Miller farmed in what became a highly competitive "Livestock Valley," centred in Pickering. Of the 350-plus members of the International Livestock Hall of Fame in Louisville, Kentucky, 11 are Canadians. Remarkably, the farm homes of seven Canadian members were clustered in Pickering, Markham and Whitby – including John Miller, his son Robert and brother Willie. No other area family has more members than the Millers.

A century ago, Robert Miller managed Thistle Ha' and then his own farm for many years. He was also a livestock judge throughout North and South America, a director of four breed associations, the founding Chairman of the Canadian National Livestock Records, the first "farmer President" of the Canadian National Exhibition, and helped form the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. Willie Miller was considered to be among the best judges of livestock on this continent in the late 1800s.

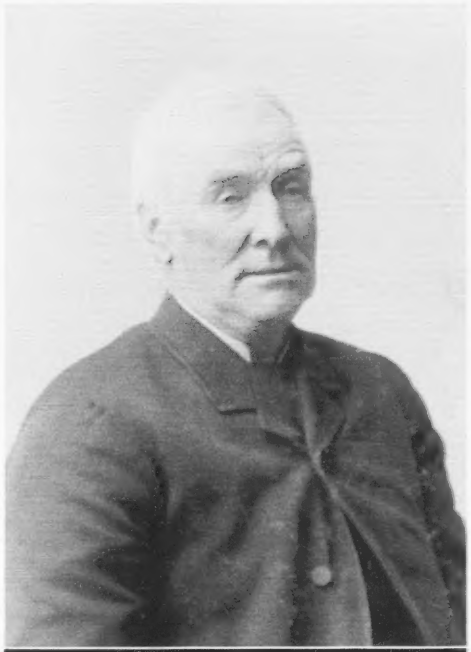
The past 40 years have been difficult at Thistle Ha'. Two-thirds of the farm, including buildings, was expropriated for a proposed airport in Pickering in 1972. John Miller's grandson, Hugh, decided to hire the best lawyer he could find to fight the expropriation. Ultimately, the Supreme Court of Canada ordered that the property title be returned to the family. To reduce risk of re-expropriation, Hugh Miller pursued heritage protection. The federal government declared the farm a National Historic Site in 1973 in recognition of the Miller family's contributions to Canadian agriculture and North and South American livestock breeding.

In Canada, Thistle Ha' is unique; it is the only privately owned family farm that is a National Historic Site. The family subsequently negotiated a heritage conservation easement agreement with the Ontario Heritage Trust in 1977.

In 1985, the interior of the stone farmhouse at Thistle Ha' was destroyed by fire. The local community and the Ontario Heritage Trust provided expert resources, including the services of noted heritage architect Philip Goldsmith, to help the Millers rebuild.

Today, Thistle Ha' remains an active farm in the shadow of urban sprawl, adjacent to 7,500 hectares (18,532 acres) owned by the federal government for an unbuilt airport. It is in the heart of the last remaining expanse of Canada's best Class 1 soil between Toronto and the Atlantic coast. This rich earth was the reason for the success of Ontario's pioneer farmers, and the foundation of southern Ontario's prosperity. The Millers continue to believe that careful stewardship of this irreplaceable soil ensures that Thistle Ha's only purpose – growing food – endures.

To learn more, visit www.thistleha.com.



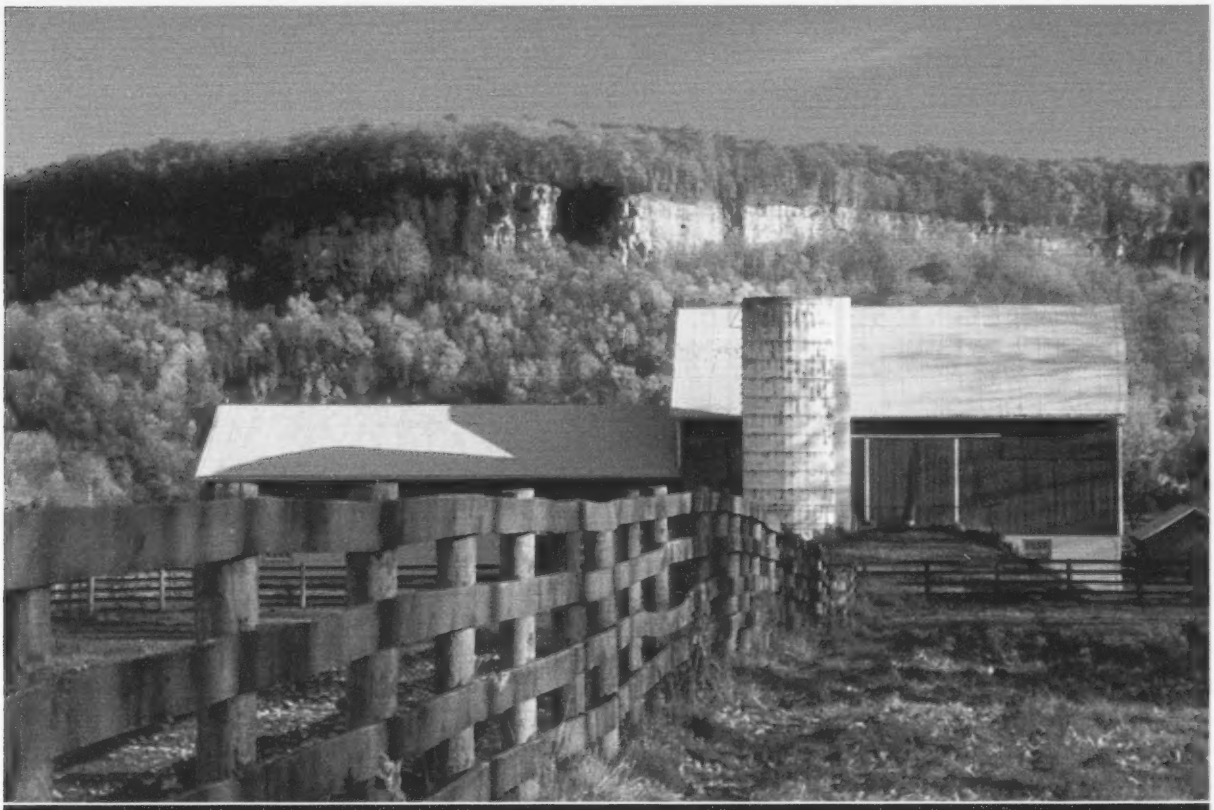
Scottish immigrant John Miller (1817-1904) settled Thistle Ha' farm in 1839. Photo taken circa 1883. (Reproduced with permission from the Thistle Ha' private collection.)

Jim Miller, John Miller's great-grandson, is the present owner and operator of Thistle Ha' farm. Christopher Miller, John Miller's great-great-grandson, is a PhD candidate in the Department of History at Montreal's Concordia University.

PROTECTING ONTARIO'S AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES:

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

By Kathryn McLeod



Farmland along the Niagara Escarpment, near Milton. (Photo: Ontario Tourism)

Agriculture is an integral part of Ontario's story. It has shaped and impacted the growth and development of communities since the province began.

Although agriculture in 21st-century Ontario is subject to a number of pressures and challenges, it also presents exciting and innovative opportunities for social and economic prosperity, and for the preservation of significant working landscapes. One way to support the preservation of Ontario's agricultural heritage is to build on past traditions to embrace new and creative approaches to farming in the province. Such approaches have the potential to ensure that agricultural land continues to be used for its intended purpose, and remains a viable part of Ontario's identity, while supporting alternative options for building community, stimulating the economy and enhancing the development of a sustainable food system.

As demonstrated by the hot, dry conditions of this past summer, agriculture is subject to ongoing challenges, including drought and shifting market costs. Such conditions can make farming difficult as farmers struggle to make ends meet, and to ensure the ongoing viability of their land. In addition to these ongoing challenges, agriculture – and the preservation of agricultural land in Ontario – is subject to long-term pressures that can have serious and, at times, irreversible implications for the future of farming in the province.

According to the Canada Land Inventory, only 0.5 per cent of the country's land is categorized as Class 1 farmland. Over half of this land is located in Ontario, with some of the most fertile land located just west of Toronto. Ontario's farmland, however, also represents an attractive, non-renewable commodity for developers who stand to benefit from urban and suburban expansion. Once this farmland is developed, it is lost forever. The 2011 Agricultural Census indicates a 9.2 per cent decrease in the number of census farms in Ontario between 2006 and 2011, and an overall 4.8 per cent decrease in farm area during this same period.

This disappearance of agricultural land is often accompanied by astronomical increases in the value of remaining farmland, particularly in proximity to urban centres. Although the land may be zoned for agriculture, it is increasingly purchased on speculation in anticipation of further expansion of the municipal settlement boundaries or future changes in current land-use planning restrictions. Such purchases can and do result in large increases to the value of nearby farmland, making it difficult for farmers who don't wish to sell their land, and jeopardizing the long-term future of their agricultural enterprises. ▶

PROTECTING ONTARIO'S AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES *continued*

A related challenge arises from the loss of farmland biodiversity in Ontario due to the large and specialized nature of many of the province's farms. In order to remain economically viable, many farms sell their produce to food companies that demand massive quantities of a uniform product. This agribusiness approach is focused on the production of crops that can be grown quickly and reliably, often at the expense of the survival of local and regional crop varieties, and of the overall ecological health of the land. Unfortunately, at present, few financial incentives exist to enable farmers to act as environmental stewards by pursuing an agricultural approach that embraces biodiversity and recognizes the place of farmland in the larger ecological system.

The future of agriculture in Ontario is threatened by a loss of farmland and by a shortage of current and future farmers. Our current generation of farmers is aging; statistics suggest that few of their children want to take over the family farm. This situation is compounded by the increasing costs of farming and the availability of cheap, imported produce, both of which make it difficult for Ontario farmers to remain competitive. And the high cost of good farmland is a barrier to attracting the next generations of farmers.

A drastic reduction in agricultural infrastructure – such as processing facilities, abattoirs, cheese plants and other related industries – has also altered Ontario's agricultural landscape, as produce is now often shipped much farther afield for processing before being transported to destinations across the globe. It is estimated that only 10 to 15 per cent of the province's overall food production actually makes it to Ontario tables, the rest being exported. This fact greatly limits access to ready and affordable local food options.

Right across Ontario, "Eat local" and "Buy fresh Buy local" initiatives have been established, encouraging consumers to connect directly with local farmers. (Photo: Ontario Tourism)

Arable land competes with infrastructure, as seen here with this vineyard nestled in the Twenty Valley region of the Niagara Peninsula, coexisting with the busy six-lane Queen Elizabeth Way near Beamsville.

The challenges presented by current production systems, and competition from large retail outlets able to sell foreign-grown food at low prices, make it difficult for farmers to earn an income by selling directly to consumers. This distance between producer and consumer can contribute to a decline in knowledge about how food is produced, and about how to shop for and cook fresh food by taking a local, healthy and affordable approach.

In spite of these challenges, new and innovative approaches that support farming and the preservation of agricultural land across Ontario continue to emerge. For instance, the Ontario Farmland Trust (OFT) works directly with farmers through its Land Securement Program to ensure that their land is protected, and retains its potential for agricultural and conservation practices over the long term. The OFT also works to address the challenge of the often-prohibitive cost of farmland by leasing out parcels of its land, on a long-term and secure basis, to beginning farmers at rates they can afford.

Publicly owned land also offers opportunities for agriculture in both rural and near-urban areas. For instance, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) rents over 3,000 acres (1,214 hectares) of its land for farming, and embraces an innovative vision for sustainable agriculture. Additionally, the newly emerging Rouge National Urban Park presents interesting possibilities for farmland preservation and the encouragement of small-scale and sustainable agricultural practices.

Movements to preserve and provide agricultural land to novice farmers are also accompanied by initiatives that encourage existing farmers to manage their land sustainably and to recognize their role as environmental stewards. One such volunteer initiative, the Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan, works with

Toronto's St. Lawrence Market was recently named by National Geographic as the number one food market in the world. (Photo from Flickr: Keith Attard)

farm families to identify environmental strengths and weaknesses, and to suggest specific actions and projects to improve environmental conditions on their farms. In addition, the Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) program, which has been piloted in Norfolk County, pays farmers for stewardship activities that help to support biodiversity through the conservation and protection of natural features on the agricultural landscape, and that result in a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Such initiatives are also accompanied by efforts to maintain the biodiversity of seeds and livestock in the face of a more industrial approach to agriculture – including genetically modified crops and domination by few varieties or breeds. Seeds of Diversity works to promote traditional knowledge of crops and garden plants through the preservation of heirloom seeds, while Rare Breeds Canada focuses its efforts on the preservation and survival of heritage livestock. Together with farmers from across Ontario, these organizations help to maintain biodiversity in the local food supply, and to help ensure that local seed varieties and livestock breeds remain a part of Ontario's agricultural landscape.

The preservation of agricultural land and the promotion of sustainable and ecological farming practices speak to the need to engage and empower a new generation of farmers through education, training and mentorship. This new generation may include young people from farming and non-farming backgrounds, as well as immigrant farmers who bring considerable knowledge and skills that can be applied in an Ontario context. In recent years, a number of training programs have been initiated in Ontario by organizations such as FarmOn Alliance, FarmStart, Collaborative Regional Alliance for Farmer Training and Farmers Growing Farmers. Together, these organizations have worked to provide internship and training opportunities for new farmers across the province. The Sustainable Agriculture program at Fleming College also provides prospective farmers with an opportunity to gain essential knowledge and hands-on agricultural experience.

The protection and future of agriculture in Ontario is also dependent on an engaged population that recognizes the value of farmland – and of buying local, healthy food that is produced using ecologically sound farming practices. Throughout the province, opportunities abound for Ontarians to learn more about local food systems, and to support farmers through the purchase of local produce. Farmers' markets present a wonderful opportunity for consumers to engage directly with farmers in the purchase of fresh, local food. Community Supported Agriculture programs allow consumers to invest directly in local farms by paying an up-front amount for a portion of the season's harvest.

Communities, organizations and businesses across the province are embracing agriculture as a means of boosting tourism and the local economy, and creating healthier places to live and work. Across Ontario, "Eat Local" and "Buy Fresh Buy Local" initiatives have been established, encouraging consumers to connect directly with local farmers. A number of regions and communities have developed maps and food guides to connect people with local farms and produce. The pick-your-own experience is one way in which Ontarians can support local farmers while enjoying fresh, local food. Chefs in restaurants across the province are also working with local producers to bring fresh, healthy food to the table. As well, the provincial government has provided support for local food initiatives through the Ontario Market Investment Fund. ▶

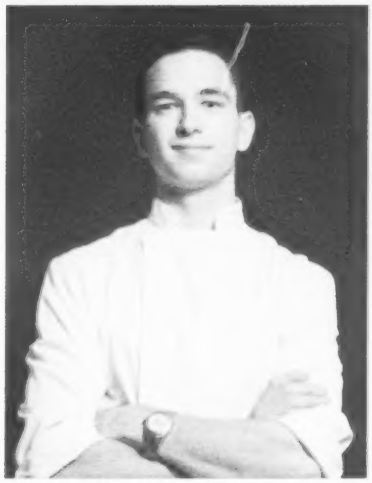
Livestock continues to be an important part of Ontario's agricultural heritage, as seen here on this farm along the Bruce Peninsula. (Photo: Ontario Tourism)

Vineyards across the Niagara region are taking advantage of the growing wine industry in our province. (Photo: Ontario Tourism)

Recognition of the need to reach out to young people to educate them about food and healthy eating drives a number of projects and initiatives in Ontario. For example, FoodShare Toronto offers innovative opportunities for students to learn about the local food system, and for fresh produce to be incorporated into school food programs. Students at Trent University support local food initiatives through on-campus organic gardens and the student-run café, The Seasoned Spoon. Additionally, a growing number of hospitals and similar institutions are providing fresh, local food.

While agriculture in Ontario faces many challenges, exciting opportunities also exist to ensure its place in the future of the province. The preservation of agricultural heritage is linked to these opportunities for creativity and innovation, which support working landscapes, embrace biodiversity and recognize the role of farmland and farmers in Ontario's ecological and economic systems. By seizing these opportunities, Ontarians are helping to build a sustainable food system so that agriculture remains an important aspect of the province's identity.

Kathryn McLeod has an MA from Trent University in Canadian Studies and Indigenous Studies and is a Community Programs Assistant with the Ontario Heritage Trust.



"The farm-to-table movement has to go beyond being trendy. As much as I have an ethical investment in buying from local and sustainable practices, my first commitment is to make delicious food that has value for my customers. What you quickly come to realize when you aim to source the best product is that the most delicious beef, the best tomatoes, the most flavourful trout, will undoubtedly come from farmers that practice heritage agriculture. Then it's simply a matter of finding the farmers that are closest to you, as freshness is a major factor in quality and taste. The farm-to-table approach makes for better food. And that's something everyone can get behind." ~ Carl Heinrich

Carl Heinrich is co-owner of Toronto's Richmond Station and winner of this year's Top Chef Canada. He buys seasonal product from local farmers and brings in whole animals to butcher in-house. For more information on Heinrich's new restaurant, visit www.richmondstation.ca.

Keeping Ontario's farm heritage alive

By David Nattress

The Elliott-Harrop Barn is one of many buildings to explore at Country Heritage Park.

In our ever-expanding world, less arable land is available to grow the food we need to survive. As farms disappear across Ontario, buildings and implements have been salvaged by several organizations. The greatest concentration of agricultural artifacts can be found at Country Heritage Park in Milton – a treasure trove of artifacts and historic buildings from Ontario's farms and villages.

Country Heritage Park is an interactive heritage park depicting agriculture and rural life over the last 150 years. Originally conceived by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the gates were officially opened in 1979. In April 1997, farm groups and individuals concerned about the future of the museum took on the responsibility of operating the facility. In assessing its growth potential and determining how to make the operation self-sufficient with revenue generated from rentals, events and school programs, the name was changed to Country Heritage Park. Today, the park – beautifully spread over 80 acres (32 hectares) in the shadow of the Niagara Escarpment – is owned and operated by Country Heritage Agricultural Society, a member-owned not-for-profit charity established to support the preservation of Ontario's rich rural heritage and farmland for food production. While it is often used as period film sets, it is also renowned for its excellent school programs.

Whether you attend an event or spend the day on a school trip, there is much to see and learn. In the 1900 one-room schoolhouse, you will experience a child's life as a student in a farm community. Mrs. Cassin can often be found baking in the stone fireplace at the Cassin 1830s farmstead. The 1920s Ford garage is a favourite stop for photos. The 1890s Lucas farmstead, with its friendly flock of sheep, shows how farming was advancing and improving life during that period. The Women's Institute building tells the story of food preparation and safety. Stop in at the dairy building and find out how the production of dairy products has advanced over the years. There is a blacksmith and carriage shop, as well as apple cider and pump works buildings. For the kids, there are farm animals and a large collection of antique tractors and steam engines.

The earth's farmland is limited and important. Ultimately, maintaining – or even expanding – our agricultural landscapes in Ontario should be our collective goal. But, for now, one way to keep our stories alive is through the collection of buildings and artifacts housed and interpreted at Country Heritage Park.

David Nattress is the General Manager of Country Heritage Park. The Trust holds a comprehensive easement to protect this property. For more information on this site, visit http://countryheritagepark.com.

Coming together

By Catharine A. Wilson

Feast after a quilting bee at Mrs. Burts, Erin Township, 1915. (Ph 10312, Wellington County Museum and Archives)

Neighbourliness has always been a part of Ontario's rich agricultural heritage.

Much of what we view in the rural landscape today was once created by neighbours working together to clear fields, raise barns and harvest crops at events known as bees.

People worked together on a neighbour's farm like bees in a hive and the beneficiary was expected to contribute a day's work later to those who had participated. Essential for creating farms in Ontario in the 1800s, bees were part of harvest operations as late as the 1960s. Many people today still remember the threshers coming, the noisy lumbering machine in the farmyard and the dinner table groaning with food.

In pioneer days, calling a bee was a strategy for survival and success as most families didn't have the combined strength or range of skills necessary to create a farm out of the forest on their own and hired help was expensive. Farm diaries show that the bee was a convenient way to redistribute labour among families who had a surplus of youthful workers and those who did not, and to condense labour when necessary.

One called on neighbours and their teams of oxen to help drag and hoist the heavy logs into piles to burn when making fields, or lift logs when building houses and barns. With combined strength – and some whiskey – 20 men could clear five acres in a day. Sixteen strong men working in unison to the "heave ho" of their leader could raise a log house, and 12 women could quilt a bed covering in an afternoon.

By the 1870s, log barns were being replaced with the big frame barns we now sadly see disintegrating. The raising of a frame barn was a big event, anticipated by the community and often written up in the local newspaper. These raisings required 60 to 140 men to lift the bents. It was impossible to return a day's work to each person who helped, so the hostess provided a sumptuous feast of choice meat, garden vegetables and pies galore, often followed by competitive games and a dance in the new barn.

Harvest time – when work demands reached a fevered pitch – was another occasion for calling a bee. Bees were held to mow hay, thresh grains, pull flax and fill silos. New machinery – such as a steam thresher, hay press, corn chopper or power saw – might be owned by one farmer who took his equipment around to other neighbouring farms, one at a time, where the men would gather to help. Some tasks were so mind-numbing and time-consuming that it was more pleasant to gather whole families – especially children of marriageable age – to shell peas, husk corn or peel apples. These events were enlivened by kissing and courting games. For example, if you could cut off an apple peel in one piece then throw it over your shoulder, the letter-shape it made on the floor predicted the name of the person you'd marry.

Unusual bees were also held. In the countryside near Hamilton, snaking bees were held in the 1830s to rid the fields of rattle snakes. We must also not forget the manuring bee, the rag rug bee or the wallpapering bee. Bees were held in cases of emergency and misfortune, too. If a family's barn was struck

Loading straw to feed the threshing machine in Wellington County, c. 1900. (Ph 7436, Wellington County Museum and Archives)

with lightning or a farmer broke his leg and could not harvest his potatoes, neighbours would assemble and set things right. In the days before insurance companies, it was reassuring to know that you were part of a beeing network and had favours to call on if you were in trouble.

Though neighbours no longer rely on each other to the same extent, rural life is still infused with the spirit of the old-time work bees. People understand that neighbours are a resource, that they can share equipment, swap skills or pool labour and thereby reduce their expenses or cushion hard times. They gain pleasure from working together to improve community facilities and find security in knowing their neighbours well enough to ask for assistance. Stories of work bees abound in local history books and museums, providing communities with a sense of their rural heritage and lessons in social sustainability that still have resonance today.

Catharine Wilson teaches history, and coordinates the Rural History Roundtable Speakers' Series, at the University of Guelph. Her research is funded by the Social Science and Humanities Council of Canada. For more information, visit www.uoguelph.ca/ruralhistory.

Raising a bent for a frame barn in Harriston, 1901.
(Ph 2949, Wellington County Museum and Archives)

The evolution of the agricultural cultural landscape

By Wendy Shearer

Many of Ontario's rural roads still contain evidence of tree planting that began at the end of the 19th century. Replacement planting of these mature trees will ensure the continuation of the special character of this rural roadscape.

The agricultural cultural landscape visible today is a comprehensive record of the small- and large-scale changes in the industry that at one time was a driving force in the province's economy. Today, many of the changes occurring in the farming community are impacting the unique rural character first established in the 19th century by British surveyors who laid out a grid pattern of concessions and side roads across the province. This grid created the framework for settlement and supported the efficient layout of 100- and 200-acre (40- and 80-hectare) mixed farms that remained the most prominent form of farming well into the mid-20th century.

The mixed farm model was an extremely efficient organization of farm family labour, animal husbandry and crop production. It created a distinctive layout and division of the farm into eight to 10 fenced fields, a small managed woodlot for fuel and timber, a farmstead core dominated by a large timber barn for the farm animals and hay and grain storage, numerous outbuildings, and a spacious farmhouse surrounded by gardens and an orchard.

The division of the landscape into the domestic activities of the farm women and the production area of the farm men was guided by a well established layout pattern centred on the farm lane that linked the back fields and the farm core to the public road. Each of the fields was fenced to control the farm animals; trees and shrubs were allowed to grow along these fencerows, creating a well-defined border to each field. Within the farm core area, the farmer planted sugar maple and Norway spruce treelines to act as windbreaks and to define the boundary of the heart of the farm. Today, in many areas, these landmark treelines are the only remaining evidence of a former farm location.

Within the mixed farming environment, churches, cemeteries, schools and small enterprises created a community identity and local industry. For example, in the 1800s, there were 98 cheese factories operating in the countryside of Oxford County – close to the source of the milk and cream on which they depended.

The mixed farming economy improved in the early 20th century with the expansion of Niagara's electric power into rural areas. This advance hastened the dramatic change in farm practices. As well, new efficiencies were gained by replacing horse power with tractors. As larger mechanized equipment became more effective, extra farmland was required to keep the farm profitable. As a result, by the mid-20th century, the size of farm holdings grew with the consolidation of multiple farms into single ownerships. As additional farms were acquired, many of their farm buildings and fencerows became redundant and were demolished. As farmers changed to large-scale cultivation of specialized crops – such as corn – the mixed farming pattern was all but erased.

Farmers have consistently been innovative in their farming practices, changing quickly to different crops and equipment in response to market conditions. This change has resulted in the constant evolution of the rural landscape caused by the nature of the agriculture industry itself.

Today, the rural landscape is also facing pressure for change from outside the farming community. New infrastructure installations – such as communications towers, transmission lines, solar panel stations and wind turbines – are adding large structures to the farming environment. Similarly, suburban development to the limits of our urban boundaries, and the expansion of employment areas on the edges of many small towns, have created land-use changes that alter the historic pattern of agricultural use and, in turn, create more demand for road improvements and services.

The traditional rural road had a narrow cross-section and was lined with naturalized vegetation and deliberately planted trees. In many areas, mature sugar maples still shade these back roads, adding to their appeal as scenic routes. These roadside edges, however, are vulnerable to road-widening improvements needed to accommodate increased traffic.

Despite these developments, glimpses of the historic pattern of agriculture still exist in some parts of the province. For example, the farmers in the Waterloo region are generating some of Ontario's highest receipts despite a reliance on traditional horsepower on farms averaging 64 hectares (159 acres). Furthermore, throughout the province, a new generation of farmers is successfully experimenting with a range of new products and specialized crops for niche markets. This change is creating new patterns of farm buildings within the historic country road grid, the foundation of the agricultural landscape. This ongoing evolution of the landscape is clearly evident to any traveller who ventures off the highway to see what's up at the farm.

Wendy Shearer is a landscape architect and the Managing Director of Cultural Heritage with MHBC Planning, Urban Design & Landscape Architecture in Kitchener.

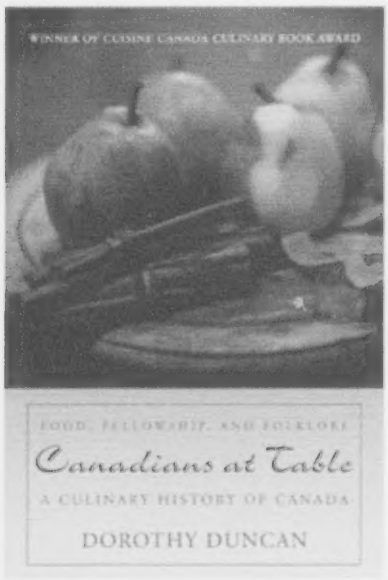
Recent infrastructure additions to the rural landscape contrast with the scale of the agricultural built form. In many areas, changes in farming practices have resulted in abandoned farm buildings and enlarged field patterns.

This historical atlas sketch illustrates the ideal mixed farm layout. The farmhouse, barn and outbuildings are efficiently arranged along the laneway that links the fields and the farm core with the public road. (From the 1877 version of the Illustrated Historical Atlas of the County of Peel.)

WHAT'S ON . . .

. . . the shelf

Canadians at Table: A Culinary History of Canada
(by Dorothy Duncan) Dundurn Press, 2011. In Canadians at Table, we learn about lessons of survival from the First Nations, the foods that fuelled fur traders and the adaptability of early settlers to their new environment. As communities developed and transportation improved, waves of newcomers arrived, bringing memories of foods, beverages and traditions they had known, which were almost impossible to implement in their new homeland. They discovered instead how to use native plants for many of their needs.


WINNER OF CUISINE CANADA CULINARY BOOK AWARD
FOOD, FELLOWSHIP, AND FOLKLORE
Canadians at Table
A CULINARY HISTORY OF CANADA
DOROTHY DUNCAN

. . . the web

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) – www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/index.html

OMAFRA Fact Sheet – Conservation Easements for Agricultural Land Use – www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/facts/11-027.htm

Ontario Farmland Trust – www.ontariofarmlandtrust.ca

The Metcalf Foundation – Publications and Resources – http://metcalffoundation.com/publications-resources/overview

Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation – http://greenbelt.ca

Rare Breeds Canada – www.rarebreedscanada.ca/about.htm

Fleming College – Sustainable Agriculture program – http://flemingcollege.ca/programs/sustainable-agriculture

Golden Horseshoe Agriculture & Agri-Food Strategy – Food & Farming: An Action Plan 2021 – www.hamilton.ca/NR/rdonlyres/53011427-6D1F-4573-816C-0A16D65EA23D/0/Action_Plan1.pdf

Toronto and Region Conservation Authority – www.trca.on.ca

Evergreen Foundation – www.evergreen.ca

Community Supported Agriculture – Ontario Directory – http://csafarms.ca

Sustain Ontario – http://sustainontario.com

Trent University – Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems program – www.trentu.ca/agriculture

Ontario Federation of Agriculture – www.ofa.on.ca

Farm Start – www.farmstart.ca

FarmON Alliance – www.farmlink.net/en/farmon

Union des cultivateurs franco-ontariens (UCFO) – www.ucfo.ca

Statistics Canada – 2011 Census of Agriculture – www.statcan.gc.ca/ca-ra2011/index-eng.htm

University of Guelph – Rural History – www.uoguelph.ca/ruralhistory

University of Guelph – Ontario Agricultural College – www.uoguelph.ca/oac

Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) – www.norfolkalus.com

In the coming months . . .

The Ontario Heritage Trust regularly hosts or attends events that impact our rich and unique heritage. From provincial plaque unveilings to conferences, we are busy year-round with activities that promote heritage conservation in Ontario.

Here are some of the events and activities occurring over the next few months.
Visit our website at www.heritagetrust.on.ca for more details.

We're bringing our story to life for you!

October 27 to November 3, 2012 – Der Freischütz (The Marksman) presented by Opera Atelier, Elgin Theatre, Toronto. Der Freischütz (The Marksman) is the story of Max, a young man who must pass a test of marksmanship in order to win his love's hand and claim his position in the community. Tickets: $40-$160. For more information, visit www.operaatelier.com.

October 29, 2012 at 7:30 p.m. – Special ghost tour, Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre Centre, Toronto. Join us for a special ghost edition of our public tour. Guided 90-minute tours of this National Historic Site – the last operating double-decker theatre in the world – recount the history and restoration of the complex. Tickets: Adults $12; Students and Seniors $10 (includes HST).

November 14-16, 2012 – A.D. Latornell Conservation Symposium, Nottawasaga Inn and Convention Centre, Alliston. This year's theme is Prescription for a Healthy Environment, and brings attention to the important links between healthy people, clean sustainable water and a rich mix of plants, animals and ecosystms. For more information, visit www.latornell.ca.

November 17, 2012 – Edwardian Tea, Fulford Place, Brockville. Fulford Place celebrates the holidays at their 18th annual Edwardian Christmas Tea, complete with a raffle, live entertainment and costumed servers presenting assorted fancy sandwiches, holiday delicacies and beverages. Tickets go on sale November 1 at 11 a.m. For reservations, call 613-498-3005.

November 22, 2012 at 7 p.m. – The Big Picture, by Dr. Carl Benn, Parliament interpretive centre, Toronto. The Ontario Heritage Trust, in partnership with the Archives of Ontario, is pleased to host a War of 1812 Bicentenary Guest Lecture Series. This is the first lecture in this series.

November 26 to December 15, 2012 – Christmas at the Cabin: A group tour experience, Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site, Dresden. Experience an uplifting and joyous Christmas celebration in historic Dresden. The First Regular Baptist Church, a Black congregational church founded in 1857, will be your host for a pioneer Christmas banquet.

December 2, 2012 – Corktown Christmas Forest, Enoch Turner Schoolhouse, Toronto. Visit the indoor Victorian Christmas tree forest. Trees decorated with traditional Victorian ornaments will be donated to local charities and community groups, with support from local businesses.

December 7, 2012 – Enoch Turner Schoolhouse Foundation's Annual Founders' Dinner, Enoch Turner Schoolhouse, Toronto. An evening of delicious food, lively dancing and Christmas cheer marks the 1849 opening of Toronto's first free school, all hosted by Michael Enright. Join us to honour Lynton "Red" Wilson, our 2012 Heritage Champion! Enjoy Victorian-era dances led by the JaneAustenDancing troupe and carols sung after dinner!

December 16, 2012 – Jane Austen Christmas Ball, Enoch Turner Schoolhouse, Toronto. Join JaneAustenDancing and the Ontario Heritage Trust for an immersive day in Austen's world! Participants will learn English country dance basics in a workshop setting and then regroup for an evening of regency-era dancing. Celebrate the festive season in the historic surroundings of Enoch Turner Schoolhouse. No partners required and no experience necessary!

Ross Petty presents his annual holiday favourite family pantomime – Snow White, The Deliciously Dopey Family Musical – at Toronto's Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre Centre, running from November 23, 2012 to January 5, 2013. Tickets are available through the Elgin Theatre box office or through Ticketmaster.
Visit www.heritagetrust.on.ca/ewg for details.
(Photo: Bruce Zinger)

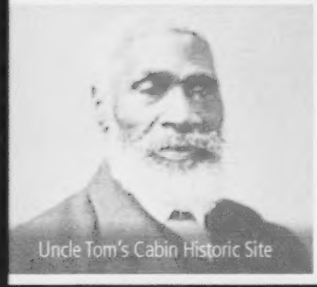
BRINGING OUR STORY TO LIFE

Ontario Heritage Trust

Photo: Fulford Place, Brockville

ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST
BRINGING OUR STORY TO LIFE

For more information, visit
www.heritagetrust.on.ca/museums
or snap this tag:


Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site

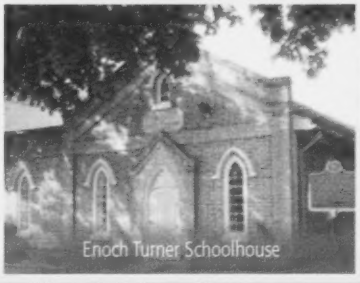
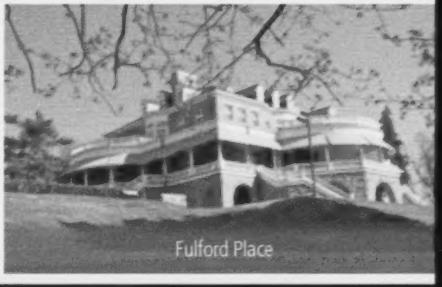

Enoch Turner Schoolhouse

Photo: David Lee
Parliament interpretive centre


Fulford Place

MISSING:

Elgin Theatre chandelier

Last seen in 1935. Approximately 100 years old.
Stained glass with brass trim.

Please contribute to the Chandelier project.
Visit **www.heritagetrust.on.ca/EWG100**
or call **416-326-1351.**

Illuminate our past. Light our future.

100
The Elgin and Winter Garden Theatre Centre

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